

Muyexe Pilot project in the Greater Giyani Municipality

1. Introduction

President Jacob Zuma on Monday, 17 August 2009, launched the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), in Muyexe Village, Greater Giyani Municipality, Limpopo Province.

The Comprehensive rural development is a national project of government, with the department of Rural Development and Land Reform as a catalyst and a facilitator to ensure rural development takes place at the required depth and scope.

The programme will facilitate, processes to address the specific and prioritised needs of the communities in rural areas, ranging from running clean water, decent shelter to proper sanitation and enterprises development support; based on the three strategic pillars: Agrarian Transformation, Rural Development and Land Reform. Central to delivering CRDP programme is Community participation and needs identification, programme development and service delivery monitoring.

In an attempt to breathe new life into the land and agrarian debate in South Africa, Nkuzi conceptualized a project called the Area Land Reforms Initiative (ALRI) with the specific aim of developing and approach to land and Agrarian reform, that could address the challenges of delivering land at the scale required, whilst at the same time, ensuring that economic value from the land maximize to benefit all those that worked the land and lived on the land. With the ALRI focus in mind, Nkuzi Development Association went out to investigate the situation in Muyexe and will continue to monitor the unfolding events and development in this community.

2. Background

The dusty and impoverish village of Muyexe in the greater Giyani municipality in Mopani district was chosen to become a pilot for service delivery for government CRDP. The village was chosen because it is economically social under privilege with improper infrastructure like roads, water supply, sanitations and no electricity supply.

Clinics were luxury that they did not have and therefore they were compelled to travel long distance to access health facilities. With a bus service going to the village only twice in a day, they sometimes use donkey carts as a means of transport. Schools are not enough nor up to standard.

Unemployment level is high in the area (which contribute to the 40% of unemployment figure in the greater Giyani municipality) with those who are working being at low income levels. Two other communities, Gonono and Dzingamazi, were visited by the provincial task team of the presidency, but were found to be more advanced on an infrastructural level.

Muyexe forms part of the traditional authority of Thomo, which has three other villages under its jurisdiction. The practice in this communities was to name the villages after the headmen and the “main” village where the chief resided after him. There is said to be squabble between headman Muyexe and chief Thomo about the status of headman Muyexe who claims to be a chief in his own right.

Muyexe is divided into two sections, i.e, sections A and B, which is divided by a small riverbed. Section A is characterised by people having big yards in which subsistence farming is being practice by the elderly. To the contrary section B has smaller yards and is inhabited mostly by young people who have no interest in planting. It seems as if the elderly in section A are more green conscious than the young in section B whose yards are more “cemented” the layout of section B was well planned and was done by the department of Agriculture ,

3. The intension of the pilot

Muyexe is ideally situated next to Kruger Park and seeks to put in place tourism opportunities in the form of lodges, arts and crafts and seeks to benefit other surrounding villages like Gonono and Dzingamanzi. It also seeks to improve infrastructure development. Existing vegetable gardens will be expended with the provision of water and other projects will be established to beef up livelihoods options.

Opportunities on how the communities can benefit from the existing mining operations will also be explored. Amongst the deliverables, the programme has promised, employment of at least one person in each household of (900) in Muyexe with quality jobs and training for a period of two years. R8 million was set aside for the Muyexe project.

The Independent Development Trust (IDT) has been appointed as the implementing agency together with the local municipality and other service delivery departments.

The lessons learned from this pilot project that is aimed at fighting poverty, hunger and unemployment and lack of development, will be replicated in rural areas throughout the country.

4. Current situation

4.1 Infrastructure Development

- Out of 300 RDP houses to be built 183 with toilets are already completed.
- The reticulation of water pipes to be connected to the boreholes is 90% completed
- Renovations of the primary school: new toilets were erected and 4 classrooms were added.

- The Department of Roads and Transport are constructing a road that connects Muyexe and Thomo which has partly paved. Taxis refuse to enter the village until such time the access roads and internal roads have been upgraded.
- The temporary visiting point for the mobile clinic was renovated to house the clinic with three professional nurses and one Ambulance which operate from 8am to 4pm.
- The construction of Thusong service Center (8 offices) is complete and serves only as pay point for social grants and community meetings.
- The Department of Education installed a Jungle Gym at Pre school
- Satellite Police station renovations have been completed with 11 police officers and two vehicles

4.2 Livelihoods

Livelihoods activities are marked by a few projects that were started by culmination of this pilot project and the traditional practice crop production and livestock farming, which is mainly with beef and a small number of goats.

The department of agriculture has also helped 300 household by fencing their gardens which was started by women to feed their families due to the lack of income. These gardens are currently not fully utilized due to the serious shortage of water that is prevalent in Muyexe.

The ratio between men and women is 40 to 60, since most of the men seek for the work outside Muyexe which leave woman to fend for themselves and their families under very strenuous economic conditions that exist within this village. 21 communities members consisting of youth, elderly women and men have been organized into the Macena gardening project, although functional, is being hampered by the shortage of water. The close proximity of the Kruger National Park and the prevalence of the foot and mouth disease which declared parts of Muyexe as red line area, constrain the community from selling their livestock outside of the village. The community also face the problem of wild animals from the park attacking and eating the livestock

30 community members has grouped into a brick project that supply bricks to the RDP housing construction which also employ the number of sixty local men and women. The sustainability of these projects is questionable. Overall the projects created 205 jobs of which the majority have been temporary.

Other means of income include “*I Lift*” which owner of private cars acting as taxis. One family has purchased a tractor and ploughshares and does the ploughing within the community and surrounding villages to generate income. Some women sell fat cakes and other popular *takeaways* during school breaks, community meetings and events.



4.3 Water Supply

Muyexe's source is from boreholes that are privately owned and have to be bought. To salvage this problem, for especially the unemployed and those heavily dependent on social grant, 18 boreholes have been drilled by the Department of Water and Forestry, but it is not operational, which leaves the community with same dilemma. The Mopani District Municipality supplied the pipes for water reticulation; this process is still to be completed.

Plans are in place to supply water from the Nsami dam which got dry due to severe drought in the area for the last year. This had very adverse effects for bulk water supply in many areas of Mopani and Vhembe District municipalities. Although the Nsami dam is now 70% full, Muyexe can still not benefit from this turn of events, since water supply from the dam to the village is still in construction. This has impacted very negatively on IDT provided 40 households with JOJO tanks to harvest rain water for irrigation and washing clothes. The Mvula Trust also donated 70 water tanks of which 40 were supplied. Taps have been installed for each household but are useless at this point due to the shortage of water.

Livelihoods activities that is largely dependent on agricultural production and those projects that need water for its sustenance have been severely impaired by this state of affairs.



4.4. Social Environment

- The crime rate is low and limited to assault and petty theft.
- Teenage pregnancy is a common problem which is exacerbated by the high unemployment rate, poverty and lack of recreational activities.
- The low population rate of young people within the community is due to them seeking employment in nearby towns and cities.
- The majority of legible people are dependent on social grants and subsistence households activities such as crop production that is hampered by the lack of water.
- There is a definite lack of food security which explains the prevalence of malnutrition of children within the community.
- Access to health facilities is limited to a poorly resourced clinic which is only accessible between 8am to 4pm.
- There are a lot of child headed household due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, high poverty level and lack of employment opportunities (the latter forces parents to work outside of the village)
- Poverty level also contributed to school dropout which is prevalent in most communities with similar circumstances.
- Strong conservative religious influences have contributed to low incidences of substance abuse.



5. Interviews

Interviews were conducted with some members of the community regarding the new development in Muyexe:

Interview with youth from section A

- Doctor Manganyi
- Max Maluleke
- Siphon Ngobeni

The situation in our village was unacceptable before the government decided to bring this development. Shortage of water is still our main problem because we have to travel far to get water that is not even clean. We also have to buy water for R1 per 25L which is expensive for those of us who are not working and for those who only depend on the government grants.

We got employment from a project which involves the ploughing of fields for other members of the community. This and other projects have brought financial relief although some were of a temporary nature. We are in particular glad for the clinic which was one of the priorities of the community although its access is limited to 4pm. We hope government will do more especially for the upliftment of the youth. We have been waiting for this kind of intervention from government for the very long time. We guess that Muyexe was lucky to be chosen by the president as a pilot.

Interview with a 40 years old woman Mrs. Elinah Machabe

I only came to stay at Muyexe in 2003. I have four children and my husband is not working. I depend on the child support grant from the government. The total amount that I

get from the grant is R720 per months, for my three children. The last born in this family is 2 years old and he attends preschool, for which I pay R50 monthly.

I got temporary employment from the construction company that is building RDP houses at Muyexe. We earn R 275 per house and this payment model is the same regardless of the gender. The income is too little to give food to my family for the whole month. The spaza shops in the village are very expensive and Giyani is more than 40 kilometers from us. I wonder if I will be able afford the levies for basic services that will shortly come to our village.

Interview with Mr. S.J Manganyi

Mr. S.J Manganyi stays at Muyexe since 1967. My main concern is that I applied for the RDP house but my application has not been approved. I own a tractor that I use to generate income by ploughing fields for other members of the community and I am also dependent on the government's old age grant. I have 6 hectors of land which I use to plant maize to feed my family. If the season yields well then I sell the extra produce to community members. This is mainly hampered by the lack of water. I don't regard the project that is taking place in the village as something out of the ordinary. To me this is what have been happening in other places except Muyexe until now. To me this is what should have happened to us a long time ago, it is just government action that is due to any other community in the country. I don't think that we are special in this regard. Government owes us these developments anyway.

Interview with 22 years old Mixo Ngobeni. (This young lady stays in Mithlaba village adjacent to Muyexe and also falls under the Thomo tribal authority)

I am aware of the development in Muyexe wish that the same was done here (Mithlaba) I am glad for the construction of the main road, because it will make our village more accessible. The municipality always calls meetings with the community regarding service provision, but I don't see any prove of it. Our community is one of the poorest communities around the province of Limpopo and is badly affected by unemployment. The last time any government intervention happened was when our community was affected by the rain disaster of the year 2000 where some houses collapsed. The government built only 20 houses for those who have been affected.

Most of the projects within the community have collapsed due to lack of funding. There are some community members who engage in agricultural practices which are hampered by the lack of water. I hope government will do the same within our community that it is doing in Muyexe

Basis of Nkuzi's take on rural development

- Unemployment is still the problem in the whole area of Giyani
- The district municipality has contributed only on the water supply and sanitation in some other area of Muyexe
- Giyani consists of 91 villages with the population of \pm 278 000 people
- R 140 million is the actual budget was allocated for Muyexe only. The government focuses much on 21 priorities according to the people's needs.
- R 78 million was budgeted for development of infrastructure in the Giyani.
- Only one of this budget reaches villages for delivery of basic services
- The main concern from the municipality is that the government should change the system that it uses to fund municipalities. The concern is that, large amount of money is being given to urban municipalities like Polokwane and others that can able to generate the own income from the people who pay for the services like water supply, electricity and collection of sewages.
- After the next year local government's elections, there will be the changes in terms of the boundaries where a part of Kruger National Park area will fall under Giyani municipality.
- Giyani local municipality is not rendering a proper service to the community due to lack of funds
- Giyani municipality is lead by a female mayor who is surrounded by 24 councilors. Here leadership is being accepted by many people within the municipality
- The domination of man in the municipality is still persisting.